SHATTERED DREAMS

IN THE CONTESTED HOLY LAND

KARL LINN

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FORWARD

By Nomi Yah

Karl Linn is my stepfather and, in 2002, he published Shattered Dreams in response to war between Palestine and Israel. Three years later, he passed and left his publishing rights to my mother, Nicole Milner, who later left the rights to me. I have always planned to eventually republish Shattered Dreams, I never forgot about it, just didn't prioritize it.

Two decades have passed since Shattered Dreams was published, and yet the war between Palestine and Israel continues, with a devastating outcome for civilians. Regardless of the complex politics of war, my stepfather's writing is a reminder we are all together on the side of being human. Kindness is at the very heart of everything he wanted to communicate in this book. I attended many of his events, where he facilitated dialogue and respect between Palestinians and Israelis.

If he were here today, he would be working tirelessly to end the suffering of innocent people. Because of the urgency of the continuing war, and to honor Karl Linn, his legacy of kindness, and his blueprint for peace, now is the time to republish Shattered Dreams.

Nomi Yah – 2024

RESPONSES FROM READERS

As a Jewish man, I read Karl Linn's paper as the story of one man, but also as the powerful story of my people; how we came to this crisis tearing at all of our hearts. Reading it, I kept thinking of all the Jewish people I wanted to send it to. I thought of those Jews who have struggled to keep an open mind and heart to the Palestinian people, and have been willing to criticize Israeli policy. They will feel a sense of validation here. I also thought of those Jewish people, the majority, who seem to continue to see the horror of what is going on through the lens of Jews as victims. My hope is that this paper will begin to cleanse their heart's vision, to see the travesty that has happened to the Palestinian people. My hope is that they will be motivated to move Israel toward a sane and humane policy. Beyond its Jewish readers, Karl's story has universal value. For Palestinians and other Arabs, it will help to understand the inside story of those with whom they must eventually find peace. For others, it is the story of how ideals can be corrupted by fear and ignorance. For all of us, this is a teaching that one man/woman can see through the distortions of their tribe, their culture, their people, and come to a place where love is their motivation. (Alan Levin – 2002)

Karl Linn's unique, emotion-filled first-hand historical perspective sheds much needed light on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, filling in the myriad blanks left out by modern Israel's Zionist creation myth. It is as needed to understand the roots of the festering Middle-East conflict as night needs day. Cutting through the haze of a fuzzy propaganda that nowadays passes for historical fact, Mr. Linn's personal account brings unfailing moral clarity and human understanding - along with the unimpeachable credibility of a holocaust survivor who witnessed the birth of a nation that was never to repeat errors of the past. Truly a refreshing, eye-opening account of the early days of what has become one of the most central and threatening conflicts the world has ever seen. (Khalil Bendib – 2002)

Raised on a farm in Nazi Germany, Karl Linn escaped to Palestine to become a founding member of the kibbutz movement during the British Mandate. His experience in Germany included personal humiliation, the confiscation of his family land, exile and finally the reconciliation of these traumas. He was also a sensitive witness to the Arab-Jewish coexistence in the development of modern Israel. He brings an important Jewish perspective based on personal experience that is sensitive to the Jewish experience in Germany and how that reflects on the situation in Israel today. Karl brings the promise of healing alive in the manner he was able to come to peace with his German experience and see how that might apply to the current situation in the Middle East. (Rabbi Michael Ziegler – 2002)

Karl Linn weaves a tapestry of political observations punctuated by poignant personal experiences. He writes for the sake of advancing nonviolent solutions to horrendous conflicts, especially the one between the Israeli government and the Palestinian people. The starting point he uses for such solutions is informed not by political rhetoric or concepts, but by the most crucial and imperative human ability to empathize and be compassionate with the plight of the dispossessed and the oppressed. In advancing his

vision for sustainable peace and justice, Karl Linn draws from his own first-hand experiences of the cruel, sadistic, and terrifying expressions of extreme racism at the hands of the Nazis, from his own witnessing of the treatment of Palestinians and exclusionary Zionist policies and actions, and finally from decades of successful community building. "Shattered Dreams" is a must-read for anyone seeking an honest and courageous exploration for a lasting peace in the Middle East. (Nadine Ghammache – 2002)

Thanks for letting me read your paper "Shattered Dreams." Your own life journey gives you a rare and extremely significant perspective on the tragedy unfolding in Israel/Palestine. I am grateful that you took the time and effort to describe this journey, so carefully, painfully, and free of cant. Yours is a voice that needs to be heard, especially in this country where honest responses to current Israeli policy are so often dismissed as anti-Semitic. I'd like to see it published in a major journal. (Joanna Macy – 2002)

SHATTERED DREAMS IN THE CONTESTED HOLY LAND

By Karl Linn

To open hearts, I offer my reflections on my experiences as a young child, fleeing Germany to escape Nazi persecution. I immigrated to Palestine in 1934 where I fought for a Jewish state and co-founded a kibbutz. Years of soul-searching, studying and practicing psychology, and undergoing therapy have healed some of my trauma from the Holocaust.

Jews have kept alive the flame of remembrance and deep-rooted connection to the Holy Land during centuries of uprooting, repression, and annihilation. When I hear the stories recounted by fellow members of Yaldeh HaShoa San Francisco-East Bay Children of the Holocaust, of how they experienced fear and terror of Nazi oppression as little children, it reactivates memories of my own traumatic childhood experiences, which are quite different from my adult reflections on those years.

At the same time my early participation in the San Francisco-East Bay Dialogue Group of Arabs and Jews opened my eyes to the experience and plight of the Palestinians and deepened my compassion and empathy for the displacement of Palestinians from their ancestral land. I was distraught when Palestinian participants explained with intense emotion that the keys to their former homes have become cherished family treasures and that they and their children dream of returning to the vine-covered dwellings they recall as paradise.

Having survived Nazi persecution as a little boy of 10, I have experienced life thereafter as a very special gift and a calling to prevent racial discrimination, violence, and repression. My life has been plagued by the paradoxical existence in which I find myself.

Although I am committed to strategies of nonviolent conflict resolution, I owe my survival to the power of money that bought the land and military force that protected it, enabling my family to settle in Palestine and establish a farm on land previously inhabited by Palestinians. As much as I feel grateful for the life-saving chance to immigrate to Palestine, I carry the burden of having displaced the people who had lived on that land for thousands of years.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND REFLECTIONS

My father was born in a town near Witebsk, Belorussia, a descendent of many generations of rabbis. He was trained as a rabbi, but never practiced. My grandfather, a devout rabbi, chastised my father for going to Germany, pointing to himself who, as a religious Jew but not a Zionist, was going to Jerusalem to die, a trip he made eventually. He felt more secure being able to die in the Holy Land, because of his deep spiritual connection with Jerusalem.

Inspired by the earliest proponents of Zionism and their vision of providing a secure homeland for Jews, my father moved to Germany where he helped other Jews who had escaped pogroms in Eastern Europe. He also became the first editor of a journal of modern Hebrew writers and poets, called Hakeshet (The Rainbow), which was published from 1903 to 1906.

My grandfather on my mother's side vehemently sought Jewish security through assimilation into German culture. He was a successful businessman who was dismayed that he still couldn't rise to the level of an officer in the German army. He was delighted when his son, a physician, became an officer.

German Jews feared that association with Eastern European Jews would jeopardize their assimilation and sense of security. My uncle severed his relationship with my mother when she married a Russian Jew. The occasion of my birth brought about reconciliation between my mother and my Uncle Adolf. However, for the sake of assimilation, I was branded with a very German name, Ulrich Karl.

German Jews sought security, not only through assimilation but also by becoming economically and socially successful citizens. Forbidden to own land, almost up to the twentieth century, or to become members of artist guilds, Jews became successful merchants, industrialists, bankers, or professionals.

Jews were convenient scapegoats for unstable, undemocratic governments challenged by their people, or for governments eager to establish themselves around a shared enemy. Protection and privileges afforded to Jews were withdrawn in an attempt to oppress or destroy them. As the Holocaust proved so dramatically, no location on the social and economic ladder of success, however elevated, protected Jews from being plucked off its rungs.

Zionist founder Theodor Herzl, who was West European, argued that the creation of a safe homeland for Jews was essential because the Jews assimilating into West European culture were losing their sense of Jewish identity and solidarity, while Jews living in East European ghettos had maintained their cohesiveness. The Zionist insistence on having a nation with a Jewish majority can be traced to the fact that both West and East European Jews lived for centuries as minorities in hostile Christian nations.

I was raised on the Immenhof, my mother's fruit tree farm, an accredited training center for gardeners, primarily Jewish women, many of whom immigrated to Palestine. The only Jewish child in our small village, I was assaulted by Nazi racism at the age of ten. Two months after Hitler took power as chancellor on April 1, 1933, the Nazis ransacked our house and almost killed my father. It was also the day the Nazis started a boycott that prevented Germans from buying goods and services from Jews. Since we could no longer sell our produce at the wholesale market, our livelihood was in jeopardy.

My father, fearing for his life immigrated to Palestine; to him, as one of the founders of Zionism, it was the land of his dreams. My mother, my adult sister, and I followed a year later, after selling the Immenhof for very little money, since the Nazis had devaluated Jewish property. We established another farm in the cooperative agricultural settlement of Kfar Bialik near Haifa.

Having escaped Nazi persecution, the creation of a safe and secure world became a most important goal for me, and the security of the Jewish people was a prime concern. My contact with Palestinians at that time was limited. As I began to explore the city of Haifa, I also visited the Arab sections. Hearing the hypnotic music broadcast in the narrow streets, seeing Arabs sitting in cafes sucking on their water pipes, being taken by surprise by the special scents of unfamiliar herbs, observing the animated conversations of men in kafirs and turbans, I felt both adventurous and frightened by the unfamiliar. The regular calls to prayer broadcast from high towers pierced the rhythm of the days and impelled masses of people to prostrate themselves toward Mecca.

Having just escaped the Nazis, where classmates who had been friends had suddenly turned against me, I wondered how Jews and Arabs, cousins as Semites, but so different in culture, could exist harmoniously in such a tiny country. I also heard adults talking about how we were hated by the Arabs, especially by the Mufti of Jerusalem, who was a Nazi sympathizer.

Throughout the middle 1930s, Arab trading in livestock, animal feed, and provisions had increased considerably, as the Jewish population expanded. As the Jewish economy developed, however, Zionist organizations began to discourage trade and interaction with the Palestinians. When Arab tradespeople would arrive in our village with their camels, offering merchandise, Jews would appear with posters urging us to "Buy only Jewish products" and "Hire only Jewish labor." These posters were similar to those displayed by the Nazis in their boycott that had jeopardized our livelihood in Germany. Being very young at the time and overwhelmed by having been transplanted into an unfamiliar culture, the significance of the similarity did not strike me until years later.

Our farm in Kfar Bialik consisted of three parcels of land given to us by the Jewish National Fund for ninety-nine years. One of the parcels was on a hill. We planned to plant orchards there. We learned however, that recently planted fruit trees had been uprooted by Palestinians. A barbed-wire fence just beyond the hill separated our settlement from the surrounding Palestinian pastures.

As a young teenager, I was proud to contribute to the security of our village. In an effort to prevent Palestinians from uprooting our trees, I kept watch from a high concrete tower erected on top of the hill. From the height of the watchtower, I could see Palestinian shepherds bringing their flock of sheep to a large water hole shaded by a grove of trees. The shepherds were sharecroppers. They had lived on the land and were never consulted by their absentee feudal Arab landlords who, in ostensibly legal transactions, sold the land to the Jewish National Fund. The shepherds were simply displaced.

Reflecting on this period from an adult perspective I recalled that the hill was a Palestinian burial ground, and I wonder how the Palestinians must have felt, barred from their sacred land by barbed wire and witnessing Jewish settlers planting trees on the graves of their ancestors.

Living in Palestine during the 1930s was an elating existence for Jewish teenagers. We became part of an all-consuming communal effort to build a new democratic society that was to be an antidote to totalitarianism. Alarmed by the British blockade of ships filled with refugees fleeing Nazi atrocities, which prevented their landing and caused many of them to eventually capsize, I joined an underground paramilitary organization for a few years. Being able to fight back was an empowering experience to me at that time. "Never shall we walk docilely again into the gas chamber" was our motto.

Here again, I experienced my paradoxical existence, being willing to resort to military force to create a nonviolent society. In fact, our leaders, who later became prime ministers Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, considered themselves proud freedom fighters, engaging in terrorist acts that succeeded in making the British uncomfortable enough to let go of their mandate of Palestine.

Not only did the British prevent refugees from landing in Palestine but, one after another, seventeen nations declared their unwillingness or inability to open their doors when the United States convened an international conference in Evian, in the French Alps, in 1938, to discuss the problem of what to do with the masses of Jewish refugees from Nazi persecution. The United States agreed to accept 27,370 annually from Germany and Austria, which was a pittance considering the millions who were threatened with extinction. The United States also prevented the landing of refugees, who returned to perish in concentration camps.

After graduating in 1941 from the Kadoorie Agricultural School, I was inspired by the possibilities of establishing model egalitarian farm settlements. Along with other members of the coeducational scout organization, I joined the kibbutz movement. We spent a year in training at Kibbutz Dagania A, a small kibbutz. established in 1908 on the shores of Lake Tiberias. It was a chance to live cooperatively with others, to share resources, and to overcome the character traits that had resulted from being raised in a competitive society.

Since many of the early kibbutz settlers had come from Russia, the communist revolution provided a context for our ongoing discussions. We argued endlessly about

alternative lifestyles based on cooperative living, communal child-rearing, and collective ownership, even of clothing, but we were confused and repelled by the repressive totalitarianism of the Soviet Union.

After the training, we founded Kibbutz Maagan Michael, between Haifa and Tel Aviv, close to the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. After a few years I left the kibbutz, not able to perform physical work because of a severe back injury. I became a teacher of school gardening at an elementary school in Tel Aviv.

Reflecting on these experiences, I am baffled by the fact that we did not include Palestinians in our vision of a democratic society. Today it is incomprehensible to me that my vision of a humane society included such blatant discrimination.

Years later, in the late 1980s, when I visited Maagan Michael, one of my fellow cofounders showed me around their successful farm. I will always remember the undulating lawn surrounding amoeba-shaped swimming pools that looked like Club Med, the aesthetically pleasing stone buildings, a sculpture garden, and a tropical fish farm. At the end of our visit, standing at the gate, I noticed a Palestinian village perched on a hill close by. I asked my guide with much curiosity what kind of relationship the kibbutz had developed with these neighbors over the many decades. Much to my surprise and consternation he replied "NONE."

Up until the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, Zionists believed that including Palestinians in trade unions, the school system, and social and medical services would be a threat to the creation of a Jewish state, since it would raise Palestinian national consciousness along with their standard of living. Rather than working toward the creation of a mixed economy, Zionists were eager to expand their territorial borders. Even the kibbutz became a defensive outpost, expanding Jewish control over land.

I believe that Jews missed an important opportunity to explore a strategy of collaboration between kibbutzim and Palestinian villages, which would have been more consistent with the visions of some of the early pioneers of Zionism, who promoted democracy and socialism. The European settlers might have learned valuable lessons from the sustainable agricultural practices of Palestinians, while introducing labor-saving modern methods and water-saving drip irrigation systems, thus bridging centuries-wide gaps in agricultural technology. Cultural autonomy might have coexisted with political and economic integration in a democratic Palestinian-Jewish secular state. The need for such collaboration can be seen in the existence today of many organizations working for Arab-Jewish economic cooperation.

I left Palestine and moved to Switzerland in 1946 for treatment of my back injury and lingering amoebic dysentery. I decided to pursue a degree in psychology and later immigrated to the United States. Since then, I have visited Israel on various occasions to see my sister and her family. The progressive deterioration of its agricultural base saddened me. Traveling through the country, one could see neglected farms, rusting farm equipment, and dying or dead orange groves. Israel invested heavily in huge military-

industrial complexes. The ongoing devastation of Israel's landscape caused by their construction shattered my dream of the restoration and greening of the land.

During these visits, I also called on my old farming neighbors from Kfar Bialik. I could not locate our fields. The watchtower had also disappeared, along with the hill that had been an Arab burial ground, leaving no trace of earlier history. The farmers showed me their houses, to which they had added one or two stories. They all seemed well-off economically and felt very accomplished in that they no longer had to perform heavy physical work. Many hired cheap Palestinian labor.

On another occasion, in the late 1980s, when I was a visiting professor at Technion, the Israel institute of Technology, I was shocked by the third-rate economic and social treatment Arab residents received from the Israeli government in the few Palestinian villages we visited during that field trip.

I visited a Palestinian village in Israel on a field trip conducted by one of my colleagues. I observed three women students from Tel Aviv, clad in the latest fashion, watching three elderly Palestinian women digging in the soil with large oversized hoes, called *turia*. I overheard the young women comment: "Look at them. We don't have to get our hands dirty anymore doing this degrading physical work." Had early Zionist pioneer Aaron David Gordon (1856-1922) lived long enough to witness this disdain for physical work, his dreams of Jewish renaissance would have been shattered.

> “If I believed that our renewal and redemption would come about only through the labor of others, I would run away from here as one flees in a revolution to any place one can see and to wherever one's legs will carry one. Give me the worst exile or the worst calamity, but not a parasitic renewal and a parasitic redemption.” (As quoted in *The Founding Myths of Israel* by Zeev Sternhell, p. 69.)

My own students at Technion told me that they looked at me as a relic. They heard people talk a lot about the early pioneers who devoted their lives to restoring the land. Dismayed by the consumerism they had succumbed to, the students expressed a sense of nostalgia for those days, which they envisioned as having been inspiring times, especially for the kibbutz members.

During that extended visit I had the opportunity to meet with courageous Jews and Palestinians engaging in peace efforts. I was inspired by my visit to Neve Shalom. Halfway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, this village, the only one consciously founded by both Arabs and Jews, administers a popular peace education program. My visit happened to coincide with a huge music festival, bringing together bands from Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. The masses of joyful youth covering the mountain slope reminded me of my experience at Woodstock.

Seeing the green slopes of Mt. Carmel scraped barren to make way for housing, I was shocked to behold its rock outcroppings glaring in the sun, like bones protruding from the gashes of open wounds. My youthful dreams of pioneering in the Promised Land were

compromised by sprawling housing complexes in Israel and the West Bank, covering once-beautiful landscapes. Since these projects were constructed in European and American architectural vernacular, they stood out offensively, overwhelming the surrounding landscape.

Witnessing the construction of these settlements, especially those built hurriedly in the West Bank, reminded me of a conversation during the early 1960s with my friend Aldo Van Eyck, an internationally acclaimed architect, who was a guest professor at the University of Pennsylvania while I was teaching there. Aldo was known for his deep appreciation and understanding of the wisdom inherent in indigenous architecture and its adaptations to local conditions and climate. He told me that he had been commissioned by the Israeli government to make a proposal for housing development. His scheme blended harmoniously into the landscape and ingeniously adapted the building structures to particular climatic conditions, but it was rejected because the design reviewers felt that it too closely resembled Palestinian dwellings.

As a teenager in Palestine, I was very excited to participate in an all-out nationwide effort to green the parched mountain slopes, denuded through overgrazing. Pine trees were planted en masse by thousands of volunteers. Years later, our growing ecological awareness made us realize that such a monoculture was not sustainable. In the course of our plantings, many of the centuries-old earthen terraces, retained by handcrafted stone walls, were obscured and obliterated. Those terraces, carved out of the sloping terrain, retained soil and collected rainfall, feeding irrigation ditches that crisscrossed the land, and making possible intensive cultivation in the arid region.

The citrus orchards, olive groves, and grains, grown by Palestinian villages scattered throughout the land, were known for their high quality. It seems to me that the restoration of such ancient wisdom combined with the application of biointensive agriculture, as advocated by John Jeavons, Rudolph Steiner's biodynamics, and Bill Mollison's permaculture, could help to provide sustenance for large numbers of Jews and Palestinians returning to their homeland.

Trees have a very special meaning to me. Throughout my long career as a gardener and landscape architect, I have planted trees to restore land and create open spaces. As an only child growing up on the Immenhof, my mother's fruit tree farm, my only companions were trees and pets, and I must have developed what people call a deep ecological connection to the nonhuman living world. After all these years, I can still close my eyes and instantly call up vivid memories of springtime at the farm. The vast orchard of trees had blossomed into a snowdrift of white and pink flowers, sparkling in the bright sunlight, framed by the blue sky. When I visited the Immenhof in East Germany in the mid-1980s, I was saddened to see that the Communist regime had denuded the land of all the trees, except one cherry tree planted close to the house.

In light of Israel's growing environmental movement committed to the protection of nature as a holy creation, the recent callous uprooting of olive trees that provide essential economic sustenance to Palestinians is sacrilege. To destroy living trees for a political

cause even violates Biblical injunctions. The destruction of the olive trees pains me not only because it harms Palestinians economically and destroys their sense of rootedness, but also because it kills the venerable trees. I cherished the opportunity to plant an olive tree in Cedar-Rose Park in Berkeley, California, as a symbolic act to publicize the concern of progressive Jewish-American citizens about the destruction of Palestinian olive groves.

Each time I traveled to Kfar Bialik I would visit our farm, which had been transformed into a successful plant nursery, to pay my respects to the Casuarina trees I helped plant in the mid-1930s as windbreaks against the moving sand dunes. Today some of them still tower majestically over the landscape.

SOCIALISM WITH A NATIONALIST FOCUS

National movements that have added a socialist agenda to their platform, instill in their followers a growing sense of commitment, commonality, and solidarity. My father was inspired by the socialist agenda advocated by the founders of Zionism. In his book, *The Evolution of the Hebrew Press: From 1860 to the Mid-1920s,* published in 1928 and still used today as a seminal resource, my father quoted Aaron David Gordon among others. Gordon believed that the moral essence that had enabled Judaism to perpetuate itself in history could ground the renaissance of a new Jewish nation with "progressive nationalism" as its cornerstone. Gordon believed that settling the land would heal the historical uprooting Jews had experienced in their diaspora. This aspiration to create a new kind of cooperative egalitarian society led to the kibbutz movement, which appealed to idealistic young people worldwide. During the 1960s, one could see students of many persuasions participating in Israeli folk dances like the hora at colleges across the United States.

In socialist experiments, where nationalistic concerns tend to dominate, specific ethnic, racial, or cultural groups are supported while excluding, repressing, or destroying other segments of the population that differ or deviate from the established in-group. This attitude has always been prevalent in Zionist nationalism, which, in its extreme, ferociously pursues the reclamation of the Promised Land of Biblical times, including Judaea and Samaria, cleansed of Palestinians.

German National Socialism gained its appeal by providing work, housing, and a car for every citizen. These benefits meant a lot in a nation that had suffered unemployment, fiscal collapse, and humiliation through the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War I. Nazism also generated solidarity and devotion among its members by fanning virulent and venomous hatred against Jews, the "deviant others" which culminated in the Holocaust.

Reflecting on my experiences, I realized that socialist movements with a nationalist focus, including the kibbutz movement in Israel, have in common the promulgation of exclusionary strategies. The kibbutzim limited access to an in-group of Jews, while excluding the neighboring population of indigenous Palestinians. The absence of contact between neighboring Palestinians and Jews, which one of the founders of Maagan Michael referred to during my visit, resulted from the perception of the Palestinians as backward and inferior, an impediment to Jewish settlements. This perception helps to legitimize the colonizing conquest of land and the uprooting of Palestinian villages to make room for mass immigration of Jews and the establishment of a state in which Jewish population would be a majority.

Depicting societies and cultures as inferior is a strategy used by colonizers throughout the ages to dehumanize indigenous populations and make barbaric actions against them morally acceptable. It is not surprising that the absence of communication and contact between neighboring Palestinians and Jews would result in alienation, animosity, and bloodshed.

The exclusion of Palestinians from the kibbutz movement is also due in part to a deep-seated fear of strangers, arising from centuries of persecution of Jews. Today, as the economic egalitarian structure of the kibbutz settlements falls victim to the cutthroat competition of the global marketplace, the kibbutzim hire Arabs as cheap labor while continuing to exclude them from membership.

In retrospect, I am surprised at my naiveté in not perceiving the limited socialist dynamic of kibbutz life. I had hoped that growing familiarity through ongoing neighborly interaction between members of Palestinian and Jewish villages would nurture a growing sense of caring, compassion, and community and that their shared experience of humanness might take precedence over the divisiveness of national identity.

EFFORTS AT RECONCILIATION

Today progressive Jews, and even some members of the Labor Party, support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the occupied territories, and the elimination of Jewish settlements beyond the June 4, 1967, borders. Although this seems, on the surface, to be an ethical and just position, the two-state solution based on Israel's pre-1967 borders does not return the homes or land to displaced Palestinians, nor does it adequately take into account their pain and suffering, which cannot be alleviated by such a retreat.

Though the establishment of the state of Israel represents a most important historic event in the modern post-Holocaust Jewish existence, the fact remains that Israel was created by purchasing land from absentee Arab landlords, enticing private citizens to sell their land, and by confiscation and conquest based on claims about historical Jewish rights to the land. Jews must shoulder the burden for injustice perpetrated on the Palestinians, who are being made to suffer for european anti-Semitic persecution and the Holocaust.

In view of the fact that Jews within the 1967 border inhabit what was in the past Palestinian land, it seems impossible to have full justice prevail for Palestinians without doing harm to Israeli Jews. Through dialogue, the two peoples might experience one another's heart-wrenching experiences of loss. Jews should be able to relate to the immense loss experienced by uprooted and displaced Palestinians, since Jews have experienced a similar plight throughout the centuries. Such shared mourning might release long-held resentments.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was an innovative solution to a seemingly intractable political situation. Adequate compensation for the uprooting and displacement of Palestinians, their loss of land and buildings might help to ease the pain. A Truth and Reconciliation Committee, composed of Israelis and Palestinians, could thoroughly address the Palestinian refugee issue and negotiate fair and realistic solutions. As a first step, Jerusalem could become a most inspiring model, administered by the United Nations as an open city.

My own family was uprooted, losing the farm on which I was raised to the Nazis and subsequently to the Communist government of East Germany. Having become a displaced person, I can deeply empathize with the fate of Jews as well as the fate of Palestinians who have been and are still being displaced. Recently, after decades of struggle with the German authorities and help from lawyers and consultants, I was able to reclaim the land of my family. The special agency to settle land disputes, established by the German government after reunification, would not give me back the house, in which a farmer had settled and received user rights. The German government was unwilling to jeopardize its agricultural base since many farmers would have been displaced by former owners reclaiming their property. Although we were compensated financially, I deplored the loss of the house. But I had to learn to live with it and even began to accept the logic behind the government's decision.

I still have difficulty relating to German people my age or older, not knowing whether or not they had participated in the Nazi atrocities. I am suspicious of those who profess emphatically to have had no personal knowledge of the horrors the Nazis committed. Other straightforward Germans have challenged me, saying that if I had been in their position, being brainwashed from early childhood on to hate members of another race and consider them to be inferior humans, I would have ended up like them. Those people I trust much more.

In 1961 I met Max Bear, not the boxer but a very caring young man who had assembled around him 400 homeless youth after the bombing of Berlin. They restored a severely damaged building and made it their home. He related an experience he had as a child riding on top of a hay wagon as he saw a row of Jewish prisoners in ragged clothes, being prodded along viciously by Nazi guards. He said he did experience the concentration camp inmates as subhuman.

Despite much healing from the racial attacks I suffered as a child, the fear and terror are still deeply embedded in my psyche and in my body. I remember vividly an incident in which, at the age of 10, I was lifted onto a chair by my fellow students who tried to force me to sing a Nazi song about Jewish blood dripping from knives. During a therapeutic session recently, I reconnected with the memory, and experienced an intense pain as if a dagger were piercing my stomach.

Over the years I have developed many close friendships with Germans. I have become good friends with professional colleagues, university faculty, and especially students. Having been active in the environmental and peace movement, and having joined many young protesters in anti-nuclear demonstrations, I was impressed by their political sophistication and commitment to social causes.

In 1986, as a fellow of the German Academic Exchange Service I had the opportunity to talk to large audiences about Environmental Design in the Service of Peace (Umweltgestaltung Im Dienste Des Friedens) on behalf of Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR). I tried to express my empathy for Germans' initial infatuation with Hitler, who provided them work, dignity, and a sense of strength in the wake of Germany's years as a defeated nation, coping with a severe economic depression, after the First World War. At the same time, I expressed my horror for the atrocities and genocide that Nazi Germany committed. I was pleased when quite a few members of the audience came to me saying how surprised they were that a Jew did not condemn them outright. Many of them opened up, and, eager to share their experiences, asked for me to meet with them again.

Much to my surprise, lively and heated discussions occurred in one of my lectures in the Architects Building, sponsored by the Technical University of Berlin. Middle-aged Germans in the audience complained that their parents would never share their Nazi experiences with them; that this taboo made it very hard for them, children of the Nazi generation, to confront and cope with life's problems. My students, the grandchildren of

the Nazi generation, were trying very hard to encourage their grandparents to talk about their experience during the Nazi regime and the Second World War. They hadn't given up on their grandparents, as their parents had. I urged them to continue their efforts to be in dialogue with their grandparents, which hopefully would contribute to healing. In *Inability to Mourn* (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1975), psychoanalysts Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich suggest that Germans' inability to talk about and mourn the defeat of the Third Reich contributes to the festering of neo-Nazism.

STANDING AT THE ABYSS

Blood has been shed over the Holy Land, by both Arabs and Jews, since the beginning of Zionism in the late-nineteenth century. Today enflamed passions and explosive hatred between Israelis and Palestinians have spiraled out of control. Construction and expansion of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories results in attacks on settlers.

Sharon's intentionally provocative visit to the Dome of the Rock, the Muslims' holiest site in Palestine, accompanied by 1,500 police, unleashed the second Intifadah. Assassinations of Palestinian leaders were followed by suicide bombing of innocent civilians in the heart of Israel, causing pervasive fear among Israeli citizens for their daily survival.

Israel's devastating military assaults against Palestinians, their dwellings and infrastructure, as occurred in the Jenin refugee camp, has inflamed the Arab world while desensitizing and hardening young Israeli soldiers, teaching them that violence and power are the final arbiters. Beyond the physical and emotional damage done to Palestinians, the erosion of humanity within Israeli society will have terrible repercussions on its form of government and its citizens.

Memories of a long history of persecution and victimization of Jews, and the unimaginable heinous crimes and genocide of six million Jews perpetrated by the National Socialist regime of Germany, compel many Israelis today to crave the power of self-protection. Israel's overbearing exercise of military might masks a longstanding sense of fear and frailty. The exaggerated striving and expression of power has degenerated to the extent that it resembles the worst excesses of power with which Jews have been assaulted. There are ample cases in history of a defeated people taking on the traits and behaviors of their oppressors. The sadistic humiliation, inhuman brutality, torture, and killing perpetrated on the Palestinians by Israeli soldiers is shocking and alarming. The news that numbers are being inked on the arms of Palestinian prisoners is chillingly reminiscent of the numbers branded on the arms of World-War-II concentration camp inmates.

Rather than assuring the security of Jews in Israel, the military assault being waged by the Sharon government against the Palestinians has begun to unleash anti-Semitic outbreaks the world over. Synagogues are subject to arson, Jewish cemeteries are desecrated, and hate crime statistics against Jews are rising. Anti-Semitic mass demonstrations have broken out around the world. Israel is fast becoming a pariah state. Despite strict prohibition against media observers, electronic communication systems are broadcasting the human carnage and destruction of Palestinian villages, cities, and refugee camps by Israeli tanks, helicopter gunships, and assault teams.

Rather than quelling the suicide bombing, Israel's brutal assault on the Palestinians is inspiring another generation of martyrs. The galvanizing response of the Arab nations surrounding Israel, to the devastating assault of the Israeli military, constitutes a growing threat to Israel. One is beginning once more to hear Arabs saying that they are committed

to pushing Jews into the Mediterranean Sea. Having experienced the assaults by the Nazis as a little child, the current global attacks on Jews trigger my own fears.

I wonder whether Palestinians, who have been brutally repressed by Israel's military might, would be more effective if they pursued a strategy of nonviolent resistance. One can well understand that armed resistance gives Palestinians a sense of dignity, power, and liberation through sacrifice. One can also understand how the youthful suicide bombers, whose visions of the future are utterly barren, have become eager candidates. Promises of martyrdom, and devotion to the noble cause of resisting oppression, are attractive incentives.

In a similar act of personal liberation from powerlessness, Jewish partisans chose to fight Nazi occupation in Eastern Europe, rather than perish under the most humiliating and inhuman conditions of the ghettoes. It is tragic, however, when youth choose death over life, and civilians are sacrificed in the bloody carnage of suicide bomb explosions.

In the long run, armed resistance could be a losing strategy for Palestinians. Nonviolent resistance would make them feel more vulnerable and less protected, but fewer people would be killed. Each loss of life resulting from nonviolent confrontations would carry a powerful symbolic message that would trigger compassionate responses the world over. Israeli tanks and gunship helicopters would be rendered useless.

Throughout history, the powerful and morally superior strategies of nonviolent resistance have won out over the most colossal forces of repression. Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Nelson Mandela, who, although a freedom fighter, brought about a peaceful governmental transition, will always be regarded as inspiring heroes.

Limiting the use of military power worldwide is particularly pressing considering the vast stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. The effects of nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare are an unfathomable threat to life. Prophecies of Armageddon reinforce a doomsday scenario and fan the flames of divisiveness and destruction. The use of military power has become obsolete. Nonviolent conflict resolution, based on meaningful dialogue, has become a survival imperative.

PEACE THROUGH JUSTICE

As Martin Luther King Jr. declared, "Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is the presence of justice." I hope that the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside Israel will generate ongoing interaction, dialogue, and growing friendship. Empathy and compassion for one another's experience will help to pave the way for the formation of an Arab-Jewish democratic federation, in which cultural autonomy will coexist within a social system that realizes the purpose stated in the United Nations Charter:

> To bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity, and the well-being of all people.

In his Nobel Peace Prize lecture on December 10, 2001, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan called upon humanity to bridge the gap between the world's haves and have-nots:

> Today's real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated. Today, no walls can separate humanitarian or human rights crises in one part of the world from national security crises in another.

In July 1965, former U.S. presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson eloquently described the interdependence of humankind:

> We travel together, passengers on a little space ship, dependent upon its vulnerable reserves of air and soil, committed for our safety to its security and peace, preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and, I will say, the love we give our fragile craft. We cannot maintain it half fortunate, half miserable, half confident, half despairing, half slave to the ancient enemies of mankind, half free in a liberation of resources undreamed of until this day. No craft, no crew, can travel safely with such vast contradictions. On their resolution depends the survival of us all.

MY HOPES FOR PEACE

The vicious racial discrimination that I experienced, as the only Jewish child in a small village of conservative German peasants, made me realize that I only feel secure living in a multicultural community.

Having been uprooted from my home early in my life, I experienced myself thereafter as a displaced person. I regret not having been able to internalize deeply any specific folklore or particular landscape that I could call my own, yet in the trade-off i gained a sense of universal human identity. I feel at home, and at peace, stretching out on a piece of earth and gazing at the dome of stars, anywhere on the planet.

Despite all attempts to assimilate into different cultures, as I moved from one continent into another, the strongest bonds that I developed with people were based on our shared humanity. My fascination with each person's uniqueness transcended any national, religious, or cultural identities. The incredible uniqueness of each human being, Martin Buber would call "the immense otherness of the other."

Reflecting on my experience in Nazi Germany, I realized how important it is to understand people, no matter how destructive their behavior. You need not condone their actions to look into their history and open channels for communication. I also learned to avoid generalized condemnation of a nation for the actions of some.

In my teaching, I deliberately took my students out of the classroom and arranged for them to meet with people of different racial and cultural backgrounds. I expected that they would be moved by the humanness of others and delight in the richness of diversity. This human contact would help them to overcome their fear of others and break free of abstraction and intellectual conjecture, that can so easily lead to discriminatory prejudgments.

The cooperative spirit that prevailed among members of the kibbutz movement, their tangible accomplishments and back-to-the-land ethos, have been lifelong sources of inspiration. Transposing this experience of cooperation and mutual aid to American cities, I adapted the tradition of" barn-raising" to contribute to the growth of community among people. Barn-raising is practiced all over the world by indigenous people, who build their shared habitats communally. I have engaged residents of inner cities, volunteer professionals, youth teams, spiritual groups, and social activists, in barn-raising meeting places in urban neighborhoods, on college campuses and at sites of major conferences and events across the United States and abroad, for over forty years.

These meeting places, or commons, were designed to encourage face-to-face interactions, dialogue, and friendship. In a world besieged by racial discrimination, ethnic cleansing, violence, and wars, being in witness to the growth of community, as people work together in a common effort, has been a ray of hope to me, a glimpse of human and social potential.

The School for Peace in Neve Shalom, *Wahat al-Salam* (Oasis of Peace), which I visited in the late 1980s, represents a reassuring model of the possibilities for peace in the Middle East. The school is run cooperatively by Arabs and Jews and draws on its years of experience with inter-group process to conduct trainings for facilitators, who work with groups in conflict. The few dozen Arab and Jewish families in the village, which formed in the mid 1970s, share a daily life based on mutual acceptance, respect, and cooperation.

Karl Linn - July 2002

BIOGRAPHY

Karl Linn (March 11, 1923 – February 3, 2005) was a landscape architect, psychologist, educator, and community activist. He was best known for inspiring and guiding the creation of neighborhood commons on vacant lots in East Coast inner cities, during the 1960s through 1980s. Employing a strategy he called "urban barn raising," he engaged neighborhood residents and volunteers in designing and constructing gathering spaces in neighborhoods. In the 1990s, his focus shifted to creating commons in community gardens. Academic colleagues and architectural experts consider Linn to be the father of American Participatory Architecture.

Linn grew up on a fruit tree farm in Dessow, a small village nearly sixty miles northwest of Berlin. His mother had purchased twelve acres in 1913. She designed and supervised the building of a house, planted orchards, and named the property the Immenhof (bee house). The farm was an accredited training center for gardeners.

In 1921, his mother married Josef Linn, a widower. Josef was Chief Librarian of the Jewish Community Center in Berlin. He had edited *Hakeshet* (The Rainbow), the first magazine of Modern Hebrew writers and poets, published from 1903 to 1906. He wrote a seminal reference book on the evolution of the Hebrew press, first published in 1928.

The only Jews in their village, the Linns became a target for Nazi persecution. They were forced to flee to Palestine in 1934. The Linn family started a small farm near Haifa, and, at age fourteen, Karl left school to farm and support his parents, who had become too sick to work. He returned to school and graduated from an agricultural high school and helped found a kibbutz. In Tel Aviv, he directed an elementary school gardening program that engaged students in growing food for their own lunches.

Karl entered psychoanalysis, driven to understand the prejudice, brutality, and fanaticism he had experienced. At age twenty-three, he moved to Switzerland and was trained as a psychoanalyst at the Institute for Applied Psychology in Zurich. He immigrated to New York in 1948 and decided to re-enter landscape architecture, which he felt had potential as a healing profession.

Starting as a laborer, Karl gradually developed a landscape contracting business and later a highly respected private practice in landscape architecture. His most prestigious project was designing an interior landscape for The Four Seasons Restaurant in the newly constructed Seagram Building in New York. His groundbreaking work helped pave the way for the emerging field of large-scale interior landscape architecture.

He designed landscapes for affluent owners of residential and corporate properties in and around Manhattan and along the Eastern seaboard. Despite critical acclaim and the satisfaction of designing beautiful spaces, he was increasingly disturbed by the social isolation his designs reinforced and disheartened by the declining social relevance of his work.

In 1959, he accepted an invitation to join the Landscape Architecture department at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia as a full-time faculty member. Karl's innovative curriculum for first-year graduate students engaged them as artists and philosophers, as crafts persons and social activists. Karl took his students into inner city neighborhoods, where they provided community design-and-build services to the economically-disenfranchised residents. Using a participatory process, they engaged residents with volunteer work teams in designing and constructing neighborhood commons, community gathering places on derelict vacant lots. Karl likened this "urban barn raising" to his experience as a young man in Palestine, collaboratively building a kibbutz.

While at Penn, Karl developed a strong friendship with architect Louis Kahn, a fellow professor. When the dean argued that Karl was confusing landscape architecture with social service, Kahn wrote him a letter explaining the value of Karl's approach to the students' development.

Karl pioneered community design-and-build centers, which became models for the Domestic Peace Corp, the Neighborhood Renewal Corps of Philadelphia and the Neighborhood Commons of Washington, D.C. He developed a landscape technicians training program for high school dropouts in Washington, D.C. and then expanded that program into eight other cities. For twenty-five years Linn served on the faculties of MIT and New Jersey Institute of Technology. He gave lectures and workshops at conferences and universities throughout the world. He was an activist for nuclear disarmament and co-founded the Architects, Designers And Planners For Social Responsibility.

Linn moved to the Bay Area, where he co-founded the Urban Habitat Program. Their mission was to develop multicultural environmental leadership and restore inner-city neighborhoods. Linn served on the board of the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners, the board of Berkeley Partners for Parks and the steering committee of Berkeley's Community Gardening Collaborative. He co-founded East Bay Urban Gardeners and the People of Color Greening Network. Linn often spoke and wrote about the need to reclaim the commons and counter the ongoing privatization of public lands. He believed that guidelines to secure public land for community gardens should be incorporated in cities' general plans. He was convinced that through the creation of community garden commons, neighborhoods would become arenas for extended family living.

In 1993, for his seventieth birthday, a community garden in north Berkeley was dedicated in his name, to honor his lifelong service to community and peace. During the next two years Linn worked with neighbors, volunteers, landscape architecture students, and AmeriCorps teams to revitalize the garden and add a handcrafted seating area and water fountain.

With an overflowing wait list for plots in the refurbished Karl Linn Community Garden, he set his sights on a large weed-filled vacant lot across the street, where the light rail tracks of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) entered an underground tunnel. In 1995, he and City Council representative Linda Maio began to negotiate with BART for use of the land. Karl proceeded to coordinate the planning and construction of the Peralta and Northside Community Gardens. It

became a community gathering place where ecological innovation intermingled with lush vegetation. A mosaic Snake Bench and works of art designated a meeting area. Circular raised beds of colorful native California plants surround the commons of the Peralta Garden. It is widely used for meetings, workshops, and special events by neighbors and community organizations.

In 1999, Karl collaborated with community and environmental activists, city officials, and other supporters to establish Berkeley's EcoHouse, purchasing a small run-down residence, adjacent to the Karl Linn Community Garden, and transforming it into a model of affordable ecological technologies. EcoHouse is now a project of the Ecology Center.

Linn conceptualized the transformation of the nearby section of the Ohlone Greenway into an interpretive exhibit of the natural and cultural history of the area. Artists, teachers, designers, engineers, and native plant restorationists worked tirelessly to develop and construct exhibits that evoke the Spanish ranchero period, the agricultural era, and the rich culture of the Ohlone people, who inhabited the area for at least 10,000 years. A twenty-four-yard-long mural "From Elk Tracks to BART Tracks" depicts the history of the neighborhood from pre-settlement to the present, serving as an enormous picture book and inspiring passers-by to stop, reflect, and converse.

This cluster of commons projects contributes to the social and ecological vitality of the Westbrae neighborhood and is maintained and developed by the volunteer Friends of the Westbrae Commons. In 2003, filmmaker Rick Bacigalupi released his hour-long documentary *A Lot in Common* chronicling the planning and construction of the Peralta Community Art Garden and Commons. The film has aired on public television stations nationally and film festivals internationally.

The Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley recorded Linn’s oral history, and his archives are housed at the UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design. He had a day dedicated to him by the City of Berkeley. Many of his projects are documented in his book *Building Commons and Community* (New Village Press, 2007).